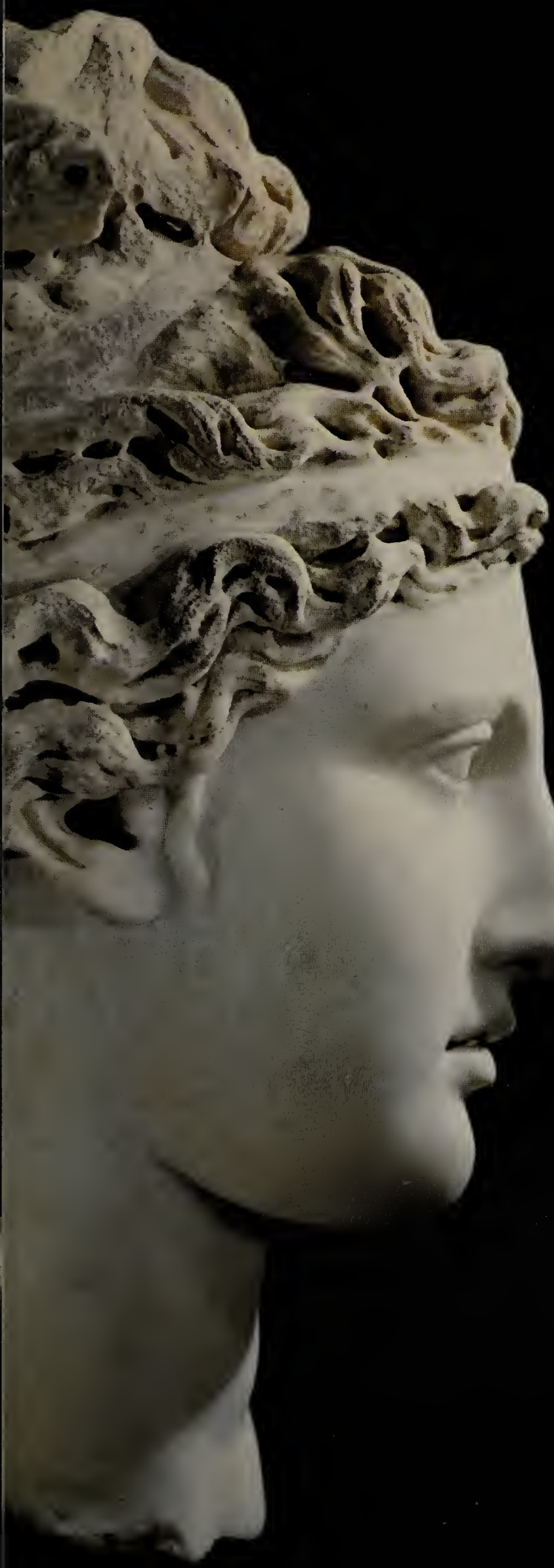


THREE ROMAN SCULPTURES

Museum News
The Toledo Museum of Art

Three Roman Sculptures

The Museum's collection of ancient art from early Egypt to the fall of Rome has grown significantly in recent years. Among recent acquisitions are three examples of Roman Imperial sculpture which have enriched the Museum's select group of works from this period.

The portrait of the Emperor Lucius Verus and the head of Venus featured in this issue were first published by Elaine K. Gazda, Assistant Professor of Classical Art and Archaeology at The University of Michigan, in the catalogue of *Roman Portraiture, Ancient and Modern Revivals.* This exhibition was held at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University last year. Professor Gazda has specialized in Roman portraiture, a field in which she has made distinguished scholarly contributions. We are grateful to her for having enthusiastically prepared the article which appears here.

Kurt T. Luckner, Curator of Ancient Art at your Museum, organized the landmark exhibition *Silver for the Gods, 800 Years of Greek and Roman Silver* in which the goddess figure discussed in detail here was seen in the context of works of art in this precious metal by Greek and Roman craftsmen. Both articles provide witness to the character of Roman art in its highest forms, and offer further insight into the Museum's holdings from this complex and glorious age.

Roger Mandle, Director

Museum News

The Toledo Museum of Art
Toledo, Ohio

Volume 20, Number 2
1978

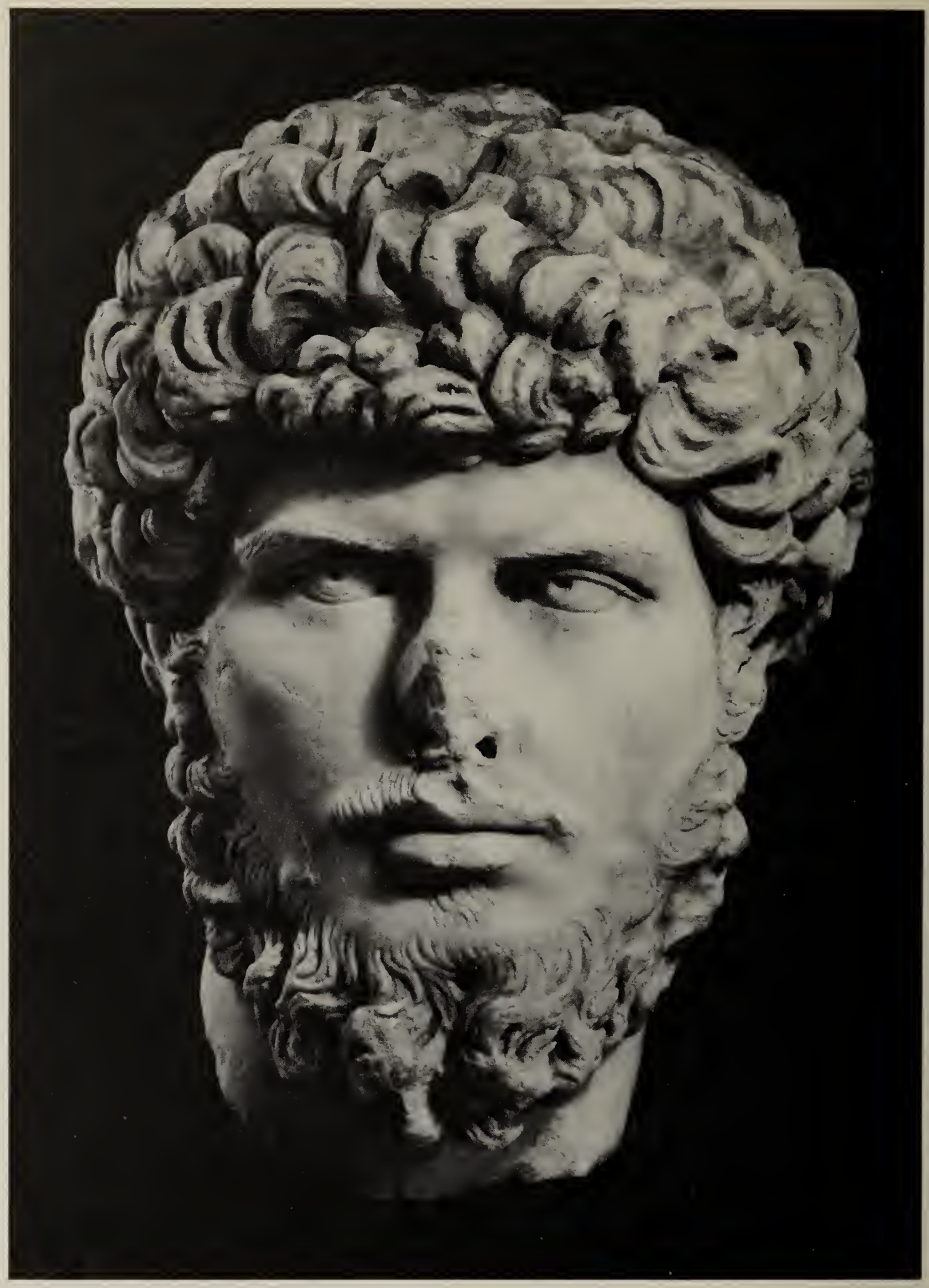
Cover:
Venus
Roman, late 2nd century
See p. 45, Fig. 2

Venus and a Roman Emperor

Two superb marble heads acquired by The Toledo Museum of Art in 1976 rank among the finest late Imperial Roman sculptures in America. One is an arresting portrait of the Antonine Emperor Lucius Verus *(Fig. 1),* who shared imperial power with Marcus Aurelius from 161 to 169 A.D. The other *(Fig. 2)* represents a Roman deity, perhaps Venus, who was often associated with the emperors and their wives. In spite of their different subjects the two sculptures have much in common in style, expressive character and sculptural technique. In both, the contrast between the brilliant chiaroscuro of hair and smoothly polished flesh exemplifies the baroque character of Roman art at this time, while the brooding eyes signal the introspective mood of an age increasingly troubled by military, political and economic crises.

In the first years of the joint reign of Lucius Verus and Marcus Aurelius, Rome was again at war with her formidable rivals in the East, the Parthians. Soon after, about 166, the Empire endured the first serious attack by barbarians on its northern frontiers. German tribes pressing south crossed the Danube, and by 168 they had reached Italy, the heart of the Roman world. The co-emperors were obliged to negotiate with the Germans at Aquileia, an important Roman seaport on the northern Adriatic coast. Though the invading tribes retreated, a lasting peace was not achieved. From that time on, the Empire was plagued by nearly constant warfare which drained the imperial coffers and brought economic hardship upon those who replenished them with taxes. The Antonine dynasty, established by Antoninus Pius in 138, came to an end in 192 with the murder of its last emperor, Commodus, the demented son of Marcus Aurelius. Dispute over succession to the throne was resolved when Septimius Severus assumed power over rival claimants in 193 and established the Severan dynasty, which lasted until 235. Between the time of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus and that of Constantine, who died in 337, nearly eighty men made claim to the title of Emperor. It is little wonder that these unstable times witnessed the growth of introspection and of religious cults promising salvation of the soul.

Figure 1
Lucius Verus
Roman, about 161-169 A.D.
Marble, Ht. 14 5/16 in. (36.3 cm.)
The Toledo Museum of Art, 76.20



Marcus Aurelius, a man of frail constitution, was dedicated to the philosophy of the Stoics, whose doctrines he adopted in his *Meditations*. Upon his accession to the throne in 161, Aurelius petitioned the Senate to elevate the younger and more vigorous Lucius Verus to the rank of co-emperor. According to the Roman senator Dio Cassius, whose history of Rome was written sometime between 194 and 216, much responsibility for the Empire's military enterprises was given to Verus. By 163 he was at Antioch in Syria conducting the war against the Parthians,

Figure 2
Venus
Roman, late 2nd century A.D.
Marble, Ht. 16⅜ in. (41.6 cm.)
The Toledo Museum of Art, 76.21

but conflicting accounts of his behavior there leave much to wonder about his character and leadership ability. While Dio portrays him as a conscientious general and administrator, another source claims that he lived a dissolute and immoral life. In the *Historia Augusta* (Verus IV-X), a collection of imperial biographies ostensibly written during the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine, he is depicted as having wandered about at night from taverns to brothels and as having had vices comparable to those of the emperors in the previous century, Caligula, Nero and Vitellius.

The striking portrait of Lucius Verus in Toledo embodies the spirit of these conflicting claims. Its strong, handsome features and heroic bearing convey the impression of imperial omnipotence. The luxuriant mane of hair calls to mind the age old comparison between mighty leaders and the king of beasts. In some portraits of this emperor, the leonine quality of the hair may have been enhanced by gilding, though the Toledo head has no traces of gold. The practice of gilding sculpture was common in antiquity, and in the case of Lucius Verus it would have been especially appropriate. The *Historia Augusta* (Verus X.7) claims Verus was so proud of his light hair that he sprinkled it with gold dust to heighten the luster. The similar arrangement of the hair and beard in portraits of Marcus Aurelius *(Fig. 3)* made about the same time may have been intended to create the impression of harmony between the co-emperors when, in fact, the behavior of Verus had proven an embarrassment to his older and greatly respected colleague.

Despite the heroic attributes of the Toledo portrait, the human character of Lucius Verus emerges in several telling details. Max Wegner, in his fundamental study of Antonine portraiture, has suggested his lack of intellectual capacity may be indicated by the low forehead nearly hidden beneath heavy curls, and that the full, sensitively modelled lips may reveal his affinity for a life of sensual pleasures. In this portrait a weak and indolent man is represented in heroic guise, conforming with the requirements of imperial image-making. The tension between the man and the office is especially apparent in the ambiguous expression of the eyes hovering between suspicious uncertainty and commanding self-assurance.

Figure 3
Marcus Aurelius
Roman, about 165 A.D.
Marble, life-size
Dresden,
Staatliche Skulpturensammlung

Among the over eighty known portraits of Lucius Verus, Wegner has distinguished a principal image developed shortly after his elevation to imperial power in 161. It is to this type that the Toledo portrait conforms. Its characteristic features include three small pointed locks on the hairline above the left eye, nearly parallel rows of curls in the hair, and a beard trained into corkscrew curls. The short mustache ending at the corners of the mouth contrasts with a later variant in which the mustache is longer. The Toledo head must have come from either a bust or a full-scale statue.

The Toledo portrait of Lucius Verus is one of the finest of its kind. The subtlety of psychological portrayal and quality of workmanship set it apart from the many routine copies of the imperial prototype. In modeling the head, while the sculptor shaped the anatomy with expert understanding of its organic coherence, he also manipulated it to gain both optical and expressive advantages. He flattened the face toward the outer edges of the cheeks, perhaps partly to achieve a mask-like remoteness, as seems to have been the intention of the sculptor who exaggerated this flatness in his portrait of the same emperor found at Antioch of Pisidia in Asia Minor and now in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum *(Fig. 4)*. In the Toledo portrait this distortion may also have served to correct the optical illusion of narrowing when viewing the head from below, as it would originally have been seen. The ovoid rather than circular incisions indicating the irises of the eyes were a similar optical correction. Yet despite these intentional distortions the sculptor reveals his strong preference for the naturalism of the classical tradition. Also classical are the balance and harmony among the parts of the head and the clarity of its oval form.

Figure 4
Lucius Verus
Roman, 161-169 A.D.
Marble, Ht. 13 in. (33 cm.)
Istanbul, Archaeological Museum

Figure 5
Venus
Roman copy of a 2nd century B.C. Hellenistic original work
Marble, Ht. 6 ft. 3 in. (1.93 m.)
Rome, Museo Capitolino

The elegant, idealized head of a deity *(Fig. 2)* presents another aspect of the survival of Classical art in the late Roman period, that of representation of the Greek gods. Her identity is difficult to prove beyond doubt, but in all likelihood she is Aphrodite or her Roman counterpart, Venus. The heavy tresses gathered into a loose knot on the crown and a knob on the nape of the neck are

Figure 6
Venus
The Toledo Museum of Art
See Fig. 2

bound by a narrow ribbon wrapped twice around the head. Both male and female deities, including Apollo, Diana and Venus, were portrayed with a similar top-knot hairstyle. However, the pose of the head, slightly turned and tilted down to the left, is most reminiscent of the many Hellenistic and Roman statues of Venus such as the well-known example in the Capitoline Museum in Rome *(Fig. 5)*. One can well suppose the Toledo head crowned such a full-sized nude statue of the goddess. In both front and profile views *(Fig. 6)*, the hair of the Toledo head closely resembles the Capitoline Venus, lacking only the long strands which flow down the back. Thus, while other possibilities cannot be entirely ruled out, Venus seems a likely candidate.

Figure 7
Venus
The Toledo Museum of Art
See Fig. 2

Figure 8
Nyx, Goddess of Night,
from the north frieze of the Great Altar
of Zeus at Pergamon
Hellenistic, 180-160 B.C.
Marble, Ht. of frieze 7 ft. 6 in. (2.30 m.)
East Berlin, Staatliche Museen,
Antikensammlung

The style of the Toledo head recalls the majestic sculpture of high Hellenistic art, particularly that of the Great Altar of Zeus at Pergamon in Asia Minor, carved between 182 and 165 B.C. The deeply cut and delicately proportioned lips, undulating folds of flesh on the left side of the neck, and textural richness of the hair may be compared to similar details of the goddess Nyx on the north frieze of the altar *(Figs. 7, 8)*. Far from being a lifeless repetition of a Hellenistic model, however, the heavy-lidded, emphatically carved eyes, expressive gaze and bravura drilling of the hair

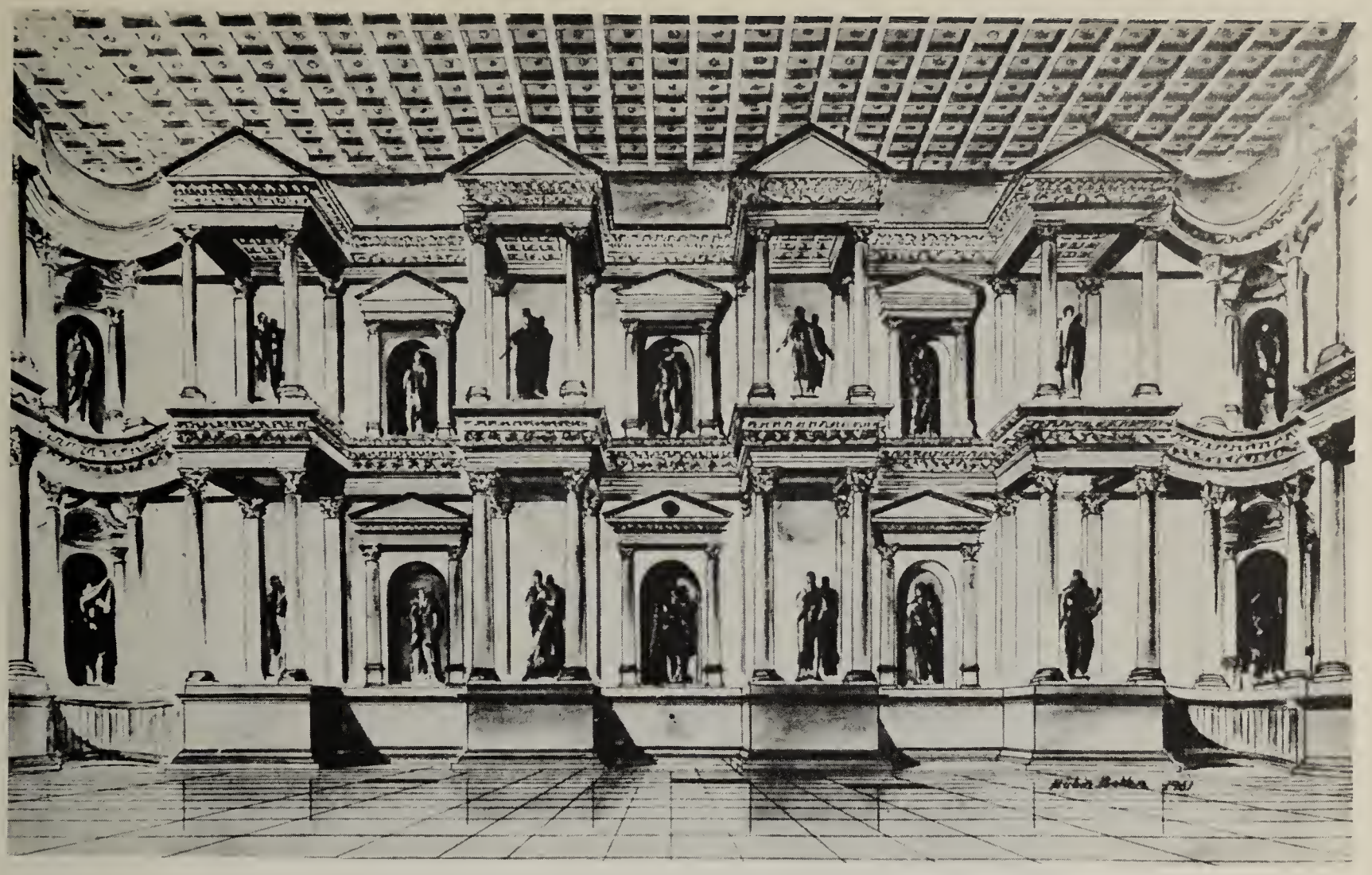


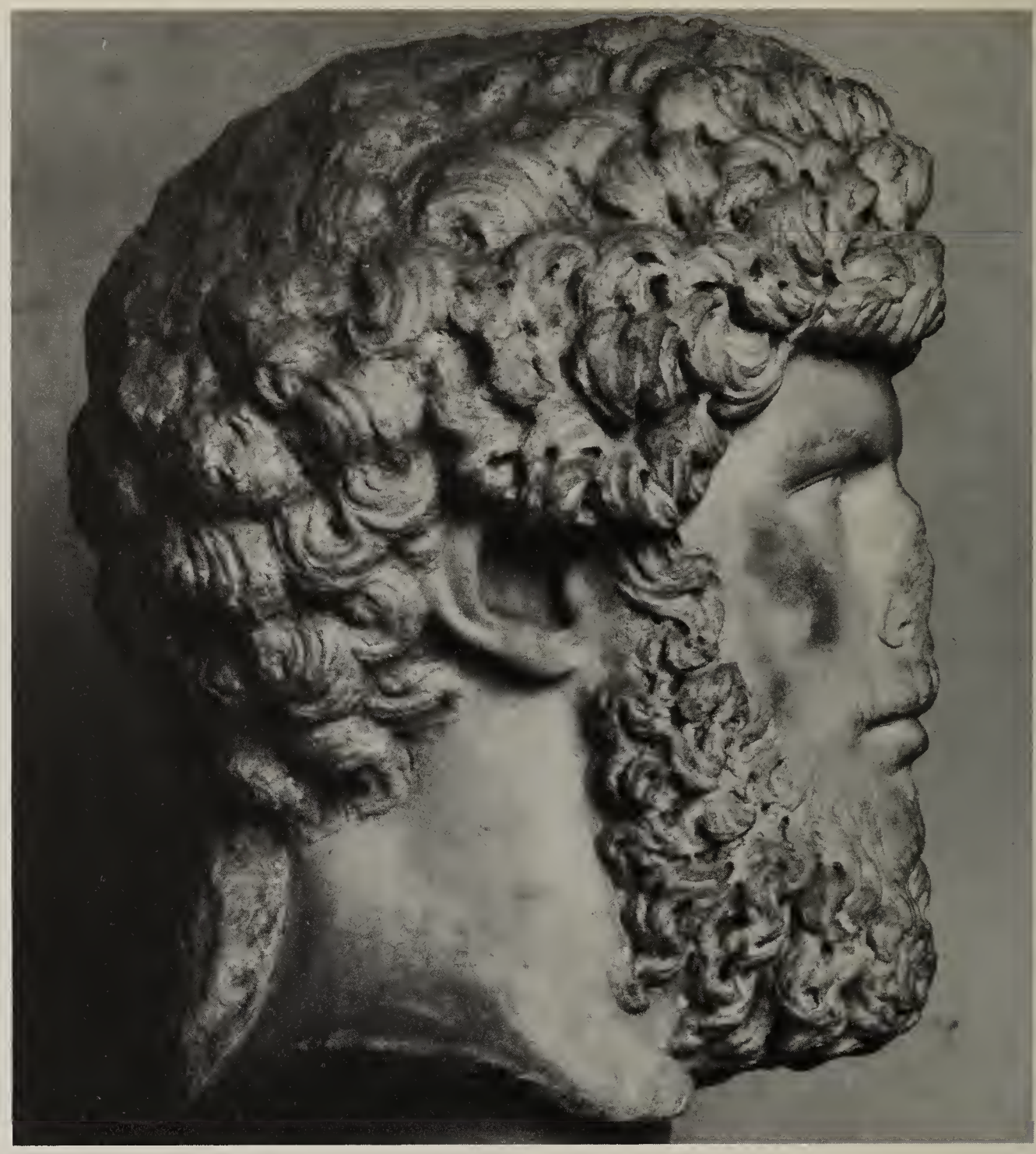
Figure 9
Sketch of a proposed reconstruction of the imperial hall at Side (Turkey) (from A. M. Mansel, Die Ruinen von Side, *de Gruyter, Berlin, 1963, Fig. 90, p. 113.)*

show that the Toledo Venus is a creative translation of a Greek prototype into the artistic language of the later Roman Empire.

The baroque spirit of this sculpture is due principally to the lively play of surface textures. Although the face and neck were thoroughly cleaned in recent times, examination of the head under ultraviolet light reveals that the dramatic contrast of porcelain-like flesh with corrugated tresses was intended by the sculptor. The cleaning removed encrustations similar to those preserved in the hair, but the ancient polished surface appears not to have been seriously altered in the process. The grey and golden patina of the hair hints at the original coloristic contrast, for undoubtedly the hair was painted in antiquity. The eyes, which lack the usual incised grooves outlining the irises, must also have been defined with paint. In this richly worked sculpture, the aesthetic preferences of the Antonine and Severan periods can be appreciated as in few other surviving examples.

The surface liveliness of both Toledo sculptures is in keeping with the architectural settings for which they were intended. In late second century architecture, bold ornament to delight

Figure 10
Lucius Verus
Istanbul,
Archaeological Museum
See Fig. 4



the eye was emphasized. Monumental facades of theaters, fountains, city gates, imperial halls and many other structures erected all over the Empire were lavishly articulated with columns and niches framing statues of the imperial family, heroes and deities. The imperial hall at Side in Asia Minor *(Fig. 9)* is a good example of the kind of splendid setting in which the Toledo sculptures were probably placed. Their unfinished backs indicate they were placed in confined settings, against a wall or in niches. The boldness of the drilling technique also suggests that neither sculpture was meant to be seen at close range.

A structure in Asia Minor most likely held the Toledo goddess. The roughly cut mass of stone supporting her neck in back *(Fig. 6)* is characteristic of workshops in the regions of Pamphylia and

Figure 11
Lucius Verus
The Toledo Museum of Art
See Fig. 1

Pisidia, according to Jale Inan and Elisabeth Rosenbaum in their thorough study of Roman and early Byzantine portraits from Asia Minor. There is a similar support on the neck of the Lucius Verus from Antioch of Pisidia referred to above *(Fig. 10)*. The provenance of the Toledo Verus, however, is more difficult to determine. The small semi-circular protrusion on the back of the neck is a puzzling detail *(Fig. 11)*. Since its shape does not seem to conform to any known Roman garment, one might suppose it is the vestige of a neck support which has been smoothed down. If so, it also may come from Asia Minor, though not from the same architectural complex as the Venus. The two sculptures appear to differ in date by at least a quarter of a century.

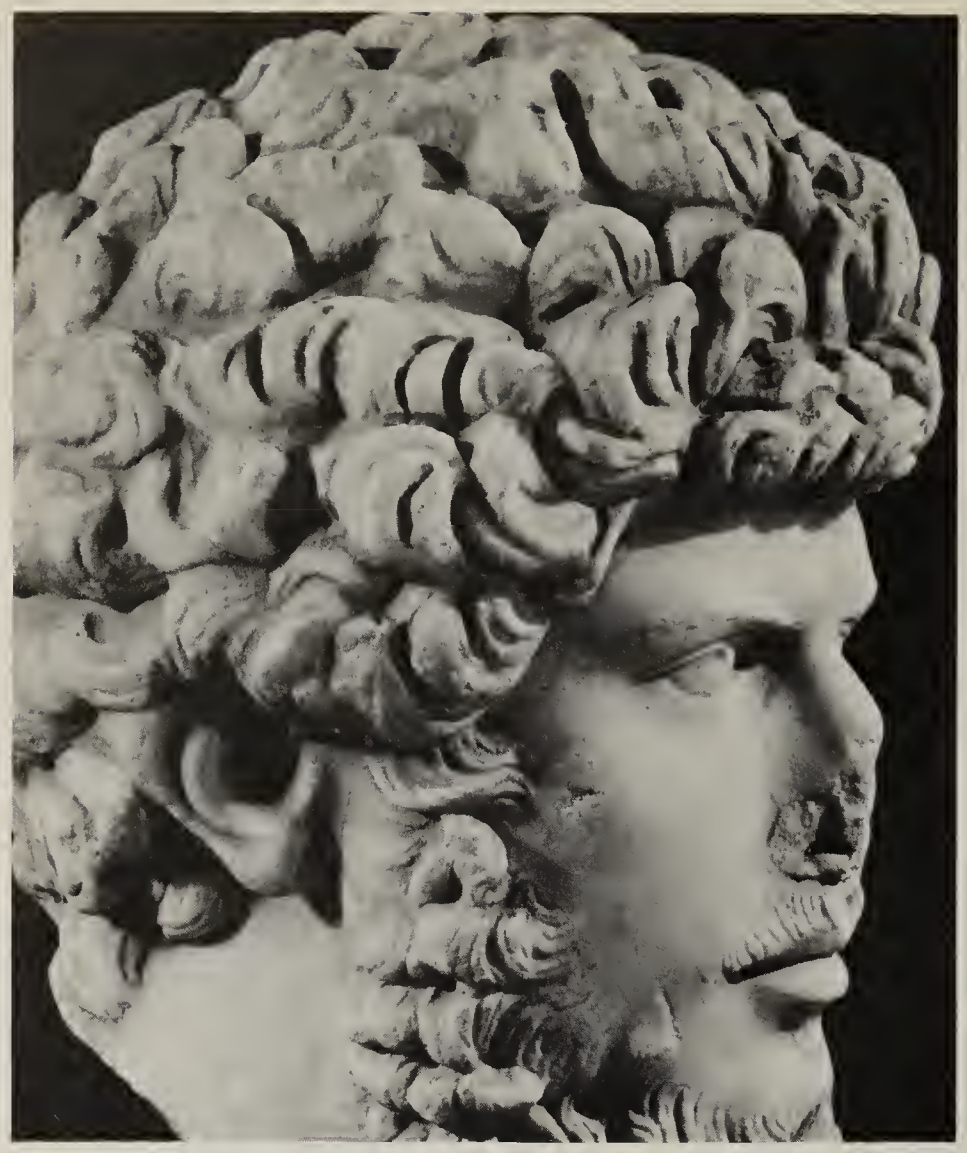


Figure 12
Lucius Verus
The Toledo Museum of Art
See Fig. 1

Figure 13
Venus
The Toledo Museum of Art
See Fig. 2

The portrait of Lucius Verus made in the mid-Antonine period, and the head of Venus, probably of the Severan era, show an important development in the art of the late Empire which may be illustrated by comparing the drilling techniques used in carving the hair. On the head of Lucius Verus the drill channels serve to describe the physical character of the hair by emphasizing the shape and volume of each lock *(Fig. 12)*. In the hair of the Toledo Venus, however, an intangible element is introduced. The impression of flickering highlights is captured by tiny bridges of marble which interrupt the drill channels that separate or perforate each wavy strand *(Fig. 13)*. The desire to render ephemeral qualities rather than physical substance is symptomatic of philosophical as well as artistic changes in the late Roman period. Artists who in succeeding centuries increasingly sought to embody the spiritual essence of their subjects ultimately rejected the rational classical view of life and the naturalism of classical art. The Toledo sculptures are impressive testimony to the prowess of the Roman artists who captured the changing spirit of an era which saw the gradual replacement of the values of action and deeds with those of the contemplative life.

Elaine K. Gazda

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A Silver Goddess

The use of gold and silver for sculpture in the Greek and Roman worlds had a long, if intermittent tradition that began in seventh century B.C. Cyprus. There is ample evidence of the fame in antiquity of many of these works, among them Phidias's Athena Parthenos, a gold and ivory-sheathed cult statue over forty feet high that was one of the marvels of the ancient world. There are also literary records of life-size statues of both dieties and mortals in precious metal in Hellenistic and Roman times, though none of these have survived.

What have survived are small-scale figures of the Roman Imperial Period, from about 170 to 400 A.D. For the most part these are busts and statuettes of gods and goddesses or emperors and members of their families. Their survival is largely the result of burial in ancient times, either to hide them from barbarian looters, or as votive offerings in graves. Although the quality of these small sculptures is often routine, reflecting a popular demand which Roman craftsmen supplied by mass production, some are impressive in both conception and execution.

In 1971 The Toledo Museum of Art acquired a Roman silver statuette of a goddess *(Figs. 1 and 2)* which is among the largest of these small-scale sculptures surviving. It is a hollow casting and was made by the lost wax process. The seams where the separately cast arms join the figure are visible in the upper right arm and under the drapery on the left arm. Fine details of hair, face, feet, and drapery edges were worked after casting.

The stately figure stands with weight resting on her right foot, the left leg bent slightly at the knee. She wears a chiton, a long, sleeveless dress, clasped at the

Figures 1 and 2
Statuette of a Goddess
(front and back views)
Silver with gold necklace and bracelets, Roman, late 2nd or 3rd century A.D.
Ht. 9⅝ in. (24.5 cm.)
The Toledo Museum of Art, 71.131

shoulders with two button-like pins. A ribbon tightly encircling the torso just below the breasts is tied in a bow at the front. A heavier overgarment, the himation, is rolled loosely around the hips, extending below the knees. The himation, a standard garment of Greek and Roman women, provided many possibilities for draping, and often much time was spent carefully arranging it. Here, it is drawn up and over the left arm to form a flowing curve encircling the waist and deep vertical pleats under her left arm. Some fabric in front has been pulled up behind the roll into a distinctive knot, producing a heavy pleat between the legs and swag-shaped folds over both thighs.

Figure 3
The Toledo statuette as illustrated in Volume III of the De Clercq catalogue. The original base of the figure is now lost.

In addition to the diadem that is part of the casting, the goddess wears a gold necklace and bracelets which were separately worked. The necklace is rigid, made of tubular sheet gold decreasing in diameter towards the ends, and finishing in two wires crudely twisted together behind the neck. As this necklace is disproportionately large for the figure, it may have been a gold earring placed on the statuette at a later date. The bracelets are of twisted gold wire, and were probably also later additions.

Unlike most statuettes of this period, the execution of the Toledo goddess shows remarkable attention to detail. The rendering of the coiffure, the crispness of the pins securing the chiton, the precision with which the hands and feet are defined, and even the care with which the thonged sandals are shown, reveal superior craftsmanship in metalwork. More remarkable yet, it is a highly competent piece of sculpture, surprisingly monumental for its relatively small scale. The forms of the body are not lost beneath the elaborately detailed drapery. The fillet securing the chiton has been skillfully used to emphasize the breasts, while the navel and abdomen are clearly revealed by the delicately clinging fabric.

The statuette once belonged to Louis De Clercq (1836-1901), a French politician, diplomat, philanthropist and amateur archaeologist who amassed one of the largest private collections of antiquities representing the major cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world, from ancient Egypt through Early Christian times. Between 1859 and 1893 De Clercq made three trips to Syria,

where the majority of it was formed. He exercised great care in choosing objects for his collection, and continuously sought the advice of experts and scholars. In 1885 he wrote that his collection was formed "not by the hazard of sales or in the shops of dealers, but for the most part by excavations made in a selected region and by a plan determined in advance." It represented a forty year systematic effort to assemble antiquities from specific areas. Ranging from major works of art to utilitarian vessels, the collection was intended to give a comprehensive idea of ancient life. The six volume catalogue of his collection, begun by De Clercq in 1888 and completed in 1911, was largely written by Alfred H. P. de Ridder. The third volume, published in 1905, includes 723 bronzes, the largest group of Roman bronzes known to have come from Syria, and is the primary source of knowledge of these sculptures. These are mostly statuettes, and it was with them that the Toledo statuette was included *(Fig. 3)*. The De Clercq catalogue illustration is the source for the line drawing of the statuette in Salomon Reinach's *Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romaine* (1913), a pictorial census of almost 10,000 examples of Greek and Roman sculpture.

Although no specific provenance is given, its appearance with the De Clercq bronzes, most of which came from the Roman provinces of the Levantine coast, is significant, if circumstantial. The Museum's figure, like the hundreds of others in the catalogue, was probably a standard grave offering following normal practice in these provinces. Comparable figures were used in this way elsewhere in the Roman Empire, as well.

Upon De Clercq's death the collection was left to his great-nephew, Count Henri de Boisgelin. In 1968, when much of the collection was given to the appropriate French national museums in Paris, some pieces entered the European art market. These included this silver figure and two Hellenistic bronzes also now in the Toledo collection.

The precise origin of this figure has puzzled scholars since the piece entered the De Clercq collection. It is certainly not of average provincial quality. De Ridder pointed this out, remarking upon its breadth of style. However, the fact that De Clercq acquired a majority of his Hellenistic and Roman statuettes in Syria strongly argues a Syrian origin for this figure.

The costly materials and refined execution indicate the statuette was an important dedication, possibly even a portrait of a member of the imperial family in the guise of a goddess. Indeed, de Ridder suggested the statuette might be either a portrait of Faustina I (died 140), the wife of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, or the goddess Hera, wife of Zeus. Cornelius Vermeule has suggested that the hairstyle of this goddess, popular with younger ladies of the late Antonine imperial family, indicates it may be an idealized portrait of Faustina II (ca. 125-175), wife of Marcus Aurelius, or her daughter Lucilla (ca. 148-ca. 182), wife of Lucius Verus. However, the hairstyle has a far earlier origin in the Aphrodite of Cnidos, made by Praxitiles in the mid-fourth century B.C., and the most imitated statue in the Greek and Roman worlds. This Praxitilean hairstyle with wavy locks parted in the center above the forehead appears in many presumably Syrian Aphrodites in the De Clercq collection. The face of the Toledo goddess also recalls the straight nose and brow, oval cheeks and taut mouth of the Cnidian Aphrodite. If the Toledo statuette is indeed an imperial portrait idealized into the appearance of a goddess, the degree of idealization makes identification with an actual person tenuous.

The date of the figure is a second problem. In his preface to the catalogue of De Clercq bronzes, de Ridder pointed out that the Roman conquest of Syria did little to change the repertoire of metalworkers in the area, and that while many De Clercq pieces apparently date to the Roman Imperial Period, this should not be a general assumption. On the other hand, Winifred Lamb states that a majority of the De Clercq bronzes do, in fact, belong to the Roman Period (*Ancient Greek and Roman Bronzes,* Chicago, 1969, p. 277).

The pose of the figure and the arrangement of the himation would have been unusual in pre-Roman times, but these features appear regularly on Roman Imperial coins. The elegantly folded drapery of the Toledo goddess is related to sections of the drapery on the figures of Faustina I and of Sabina (died 135), wife of Hadrian, on the great altar at Ephesos, Turkey, dating about 138-168. The evidence, although not definite, appears to indicate that the figure dates to the late second century or somewhat later.

Even more puzzling is the identity of the goddess. The composition is almost certainly based on large-scale marble or bronze prototypes, although no exact parallel has thus far been found. While details such as the loosely rolled himation and the stacked folds of its hem can be found in many statues and statuettes of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, the knot of drapery above the himation roll and the general arrangement of the latter's folds appear to be unique.

Identification of the figure with a specific goddess is difficult because of the complex cultural influences present in Syria, where the worship of many local goddesses had a tradition dating from the Bronze Age. Influences from the Fertile Crescent, Persia, the Levantine Coast, Egypt, Greece, Rome and other sources introduced countless new dieties who were added to the local pantheon or who modified the ways in which established deities were presented. In the Hellenistic and Roman periods this proliferation of new gods, combinations of old and new ones and interchanging of their attributes became extremely confusing. The hundreds of bronzes in the De Clercq collection demonstrate the bewildering variety with which the goddesses Aphrodite, Isis, Tyche, Cybele and Fortuna were presented.

Indeed, Lucian, the Roman satirist of the second century A.D., and a native Syrian, commented on this confusion. In describing a statue of the goddess Dea Syria and her rites at Hierapolis in Phrygia, he calls her Hera because her seated image is accompanied by a male diety referred to as Zeus. However, he remarks: "Speaking generally she is undoubtedly Hera but she has something of the attributes of Athena, and of Aphrodite, and of Selene, and of Rhea, and of Artemis, and of Nemesis, and of the Fates." If the Syrians themselves could not distinguish between rival dieties, modern scholars have a right to be confused. While the composition of the statuette may be based on some lost cult figure, the eclectic nature of Roman art in Syria seems to indicate that the Toledo figure is composed of various female dieties blended together with a dash of Syrian ingenuity.

Even though Toledo's silver goddess cannot be named, we can at least narrow the number of possibilities. The

figure's present condition is relevant here. The positions of arms and hands show they once held attributes, probably made of cast gold or gilded silver, and lost by accident or removed to be melted down. The present tilt of the head, focusing the gaze on the raised right arm, was originally less pronounced, for a deep hollow at the base of the neck and creases on both sides of it show that the head has been accidentally bent forward. A similar crease and flattening of the inside right arm just below the elbow indicates the arm was originally in a nearly horizontal position. Without these damages the figure would gaze into space in the less directed and more abstracted manner characteristic of Roman goddess statues.

The index and middle fingers of the left hand are extended, while the fourth and little fingers are curved back as if to hold a tubular or conical object. This distinctive configuration regularly occurs in statues of the goddess Tyche-Fortuna or Isis-Fortuna, both of whom held an overflowing cornucopia and whose cults were widely popular in the Roman Empire.

A famous first century B.C. bronze statuette of Isis-Fortuna, excavated in Italy at Herculaneum and now in the National Museum at Naples, shows the standard representation of Isis-Fortuna as it appeared in late Hellenistic times. *Figure 4* illustrates a modern bronze reproduction of this figure belonging to the Toledo Museum. The figure itself is the Egyptian goddess Isis, mother of the gods, who here also assumes the attributes of Fortuna, Roman goddess of Fortune, a cornucopia and a ship's rudder. As the left arm and hand of the two statuettes are similarly positioned, there seems little doubt the Toledo goddess also held a cornucopia.

Figure 4
Statuette of Isis-Fortuna
Modern reproduction
of a 1st century B.C.
Roman bronze original
in the Museo Nazionale, Naples
Ht. 16⅛ in. (41.3 cm.)

Identification of the object missing from the right hand of the Toledo figure is more difficult. It could not have been a rudder because of the arm position. Like many De Clercq bronzes with raised right arms, this silver figure may have held a shallow offering bowl, although the fingers appear to have held a round or oval object. It may have been a piece of fruit from the cornucopia in her left arm. Aphrodite is often shown holding the apple of discord, and a fruit held by the Toledo statuette may have been a confused reference to this symbol.

Several questions about the Toledo figure may never be answered. As so often with ancient objects there is little firm evidence about exact site of discovery or precise date. Even if the missing attributes were present, identification of the goddess would still be conjectural. The ancient artist was concerned with the creation and presentation of images. In doing so, he freely borrowed from sources available to him, and did not follow one canonical goddess type with its recognizable attributes. Although this results in vexing problems for modern scholarship, it also endows the piece with an elusive quality. The mystery of this beautiful figure enhances its appeal; its enigma invites, yet resists solution.

Kurt T. Luckner

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